

**RURAL DISTRICT OF AMESBURY**

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**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

OF THE

**MEDICAL OFFICER  
OF HEALTH**

AND OF THE

**SANITARY INSPECTOR**

FOR THE YEAR

**1949**



# RURAL DISTRICT OF AMESBURY

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## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

### 1949

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLORS.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*I have the honour to submit my annual report on the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of your District for the year 1949. It is followed by that of the Sanitary Inspector.*

*This report is submitted in accordance with instructions received from the Ministry of Health in their Circular 2/50, dated 25th January, 1950.*

*I have the honour to remain,*

*Your obedient servant,*

D. L. JOHNSON,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

*Rudge Farm House,  
Froxfield,  
Marlborough.*

## STAFF

Medical Officer of Health	D. L. JOHNSON, M.R.C.S., D.P.H.
Sanitary Inspector	I. L. FISHER, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Until the last few months of the year, the duties of Surveyor and Senior Sanitary Inspector were undertaken by Mr. R. E. Hall, with Mr. Fisher as Additional Sanitary Inspector. The Council then decided to separate the two Departments, and Mr. Fisher became entirely responsible for the Sanitary Inspection of the District. This change-over was effected very smoothly, and the two departments continue to co-operate on all matters affecting them both.

## GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	63,455
Number of Parishes	...	...	...	...	17
Population—Census 1931	...	...	...	...	16,893
Population mid-1949, as estimated by the Registrar-General	...	...		Civilian	14,170
				Total	24,750
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£136,874
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£569
Number of Domestic Dwellings connected to main water supply	...	...	...	...	1,404

## VITAL STATISTICS

				M.	F.	Total
Live Births	...	...	...	189	198	387
Legitimate	...	...	...	179	193	372
Illegitimate	...	...	...	10	5	15
Still Births	...	...	...	2	4	6
Legitimate	...	...	...	2	4	6
Illegitimate	...	...	...	—	—	—
Live Birth Rate	...	...	...			27.3
Live Birth Rate for England & Wales	...	...	...			16.7
Number of Deaths from all causes	...	...	...	73	63	136
Crude Death Rate	...	...	...			11.5
Crude Death Rate for England & Wales	...	...	...			11.7
Deaths of Infants under one year :—						
Total	...	...	...	5	4	9
Legitimate	...	...	...	5	4	9
Illegitimate	...	...	...	—	—	—
Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	...			23.3
Infantile Death Rate for England & Wales	...	...	...			32.0

### NOTE

The number of births, still-births, and deaths are those registered during 1949 after adjustment has been made for inward and outward transfers.

The number of deaths from all causes does not include deaths of non-civilians. The death-rate has, therefore, been calculated as the number of deaths per 1,000 of the civilian population.



In order to preserve continuity with the years since 1940, the live birth rate has been calculated as the number of live births per 1,000 of the civilian population.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The total number of notifications of infectious disease was 144, the same figure as for last year. There were nearly three times as many cases of Whooping Cough, and over half of these were in Bulford. In contrast, the Measles notifications fell to 35, compared with 74 for the previous year.

There were 15 cases of Scarlet Fever, 17 fewer than in 1948, and they occurred mainly between March and June in various parts of the District.

One case of Diphtheria was notified and admitted to Hospital, but was subsequently re-diagnosed.

Of the four cases of Poliomyelitis notified, all were admitted to Hospital, and one was re-diagnosed.

One small outbreak of Food-poisoning, although not notified, was investigated. Four people were taken ill after eating meat pies, but made a rapid recovery. Samples of the food were submitted to the laboratory, but cultures were sterile. It is thought probable that the cause was a Staphylococcal toxin, but the source could not be traced.

A table of the monthly notifications of infectious diseases is given below.

MONTHLY NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

			JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	TOTAL
Scarlet Fever	...	...	1	—	8	2	1	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	15
Whooping Cough	...	...	8	—	6	16	9	3	5	6	1	1	20	9	84
Diphtheria	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Measles	...	...	2	1	4	8	15	4	—	—	—	—	—	1	35
Pneumonia	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	1	4
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Poliomyelitis	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	2	—	4
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Smallpox	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Typhoid & Paratyphoid	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Dysentery	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Food Poisoning	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Erysipelas	...	...	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Malaria	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
			11	1	18	26	26	9	7	7	1	3	24	11	144

## TUBERCULOSIS

35 new cases were added to the Register, 19 Pulmonary and 16 Non-Pulmonary. 2 Deaths occurred, both being from Pulmonary Tuberculosis. 12 other cases were removed from the Register, 5 on recovery and 7 on leaving the District. The Tuberculosis Registers are now being checked, and it is hoped that the total number of cases on the Register will be considerably reduced. At present the figure is artificially large, owing to the number of Service cases notified during the war years: the majority of these have most probably left the area by now, and when this has been confirmed by the Service Medical Authorities, these cases can be written off.

## DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

As a result of the programme instituted by the County Medical Officer of Health, mentioned in my last Report, 334 primary immunisations and 1,075 re-inforcement injections were done in this District by the County Medical staff and general practitioners during the year. This brought the total child population immunised at the end of the year to 3,014, a percentage of 95.6

## VACCINATION

Although Vaccination is the responsibility of the County Council as the local Health Authority under the National Health Service Act 1946, it is also, in my view, a matter of great importance to the local Sanitary Authority, which would be more directly concerned should smallpox occur within its area. No figures equivalent to those for Diphtheria Immunisation are available, but it is estimated that only 12.1% of infants born in the County during the year were vaccinated. The decline in the numbers of children vaccinated is serious, and is causing concern to Health Authorities throughout the Country.

In the event of smallpox occurring in this District, arrangements have been made with the Secretary of the Salisbury Group Hospital Management Committee for the disinfection of bedding, clothing, etc. at the Isolation Hospital, Old Sarum. Any of the Council's Staff likely to be in contact with a case in the course of their duty have been advised to be re-vaccinated every two years. A smallpox diagnostic test-set has been obtained from the Central Public Health Laboratory at Colindale.

A contact of one of the victims of the s.s. *Mooltan* outbreak was traced in Amesbury, and was re-vaccinated.

## NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 1948

No action had to be taken under Section 47 of the National Assistance Act. One old person entered a Home voluntarily.



## **HOUSING**

This, in my opinion, still remains the most urgent item on the Council's agenda, from the Public Health point of view, and with the present rate of restricted progress, threatens to remain so for some years to come. A number of families, whose need was most urgent for health reasons have been re-housed during the year, but the need of young couples living with in-laws or in lodgings has yet to be met, as also has that of the increasing percentage of old people.

At the beginning of the year the County Tuberculosis Officer introduced a new kind of certificate, which is of great help in assessing the relative merits of claims for re-housing on the grounds of tuberculosis. There are three priorities, the highest being giving only in cases where alternative accommodation is urgently needed to prevent the spread of infection. In my view absolute priority should be given to this category.

## **WATER SAMPLING**

At the beginning of the year it was decided to submit monthly samples from public supplies for bacteriological examination, and this policy has been carried out.

## **MOVEABLE DWELLINGS**

The Council decided to license individual moveable dwellings in addition to the sites. In this way it is hoped that a higher standard of hygiene will be maintained by the occupants, who will now have a personal responsibility in the matter. A good effect has already been noted.

## **FOOD HANDLING**

The opening of the three new dairies, on which the Sanitary Inspector comments in his Report, is an encouraging step forward in the clean handling of Milk, and should considerably lessen the risk of the spread of infectious disease.

Towards the end of the year, the Ministry of Food issued Model Bye-Laws dealing with the "Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food, and Sale of Food in the Open Air." These will be placed before the Council in 1950.

## **VISIT OF GERMAN MEDICAL OFFICERS**

In October two Medical Officers of Health from the British Zone of Germany, who had come to this country as guests of the Foreign Office to study Public Health administration in England, spent a week in the East Wilts Combined Sanitary Districts. One day was spent in this district, and the doctors were particularly interested in a newly opened dairy, where they saw an up-to-day High Temperature Short-Time Pasteurisation Plant and Bottling Machine.

**CAUSES OF DEATH**  
**AS RETURNED BY THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL**

				M.	F.	Total
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	—	—	—
2	Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	—	—	—
3	Scarlet Fever	...	...	—	—	—
4	Whooping Cough	...	...	—	—	—
5	Diphtheria	...	...	—	—	—
6	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	1	1	2
7	Other Forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	—	2	2
8	Syphilitic Diseases	...	...	—	—	—
9	Influenza	...	...	1	4	5
10	Measles	...	...	—	—	—
11	Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio Encephalitis			—	—	—
12	Acute Infectious Encephalitis	...	...	—	—	—
13	Cancer of Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (M) and Uterus (F)	...	...	1	—	1
14	Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	5	2	7
15	Cancer of Breast	...	...	—	1	1
16	Cancer of all other sites	...	...	7	2	9
17	Diabetes	...	...	—	—	—
18	Intracranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	10	10	20
19	Heart Diseases	...	...	19	12	31
20	Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	4	6	10
21	Bronchitis	...	...	1	1	2
22	Pneumonia	...	...	1	2	3
23	Other Respiratory Diseases	..	...	4	1	5
24	Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	—	—	—
25	Diarrhœa—under 2 years	...	...	1	1	2
26	Appendicitis	...	...	—	—	—
27	Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	—	2	2
28	Nephritis	...	...	3	—	3
29	Puerperal and Post Abortional Sepsis	...	...	—	—	—
30	Other Maternal Causes	...	...	—	—	—
31	Premature Births	...	...	—	—	—
32	Congenital Malformations, Birth Injuries and Infantile Diseases	...	...	3	4	7
33	Suicide	...	...	—	—	—
34	Road Traffic Accidents	...	...	2	1	3
35	Other Violent Causes	...	...	3	1	4
36	All Other Causes	...	...	7	10	17
All Causes				73	63	136



# AMESBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR

1949

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*I have the honour to present my Annual Report of work carried out by the Public Health Department of the Council during the year 1949.*

*The particulars in the Report are in conformity with the Ministry of Health regulations and requirements.*

*I would like to place on record my appreciation of the help given me by Mr. Hall, when he handed over to me towards the end of the year, and to whom I am also grateful for his assistance in the compilation of the information on water supplies, drainage and sewerage, and refuse collection throughout the District.*

*I have the honour to remain,*

*Your obedient servant,*

I. L. FISHER,

*Sanitary Inspector.*

## SANITARY INSPECTIONS OF THE AREA

### Number and Nature of Inspections during 1949

Number of Detailed Inspections made for Housing complaints and revisits thereto ... ..	166
Number of inspections re drainage of property ...	74
„ „ „ dirty and verminous premises ...	16
„ „ „ Council House applications ...	96
„ interviews with Owners/Agents and Builders ...	80
„ inspections re suitability of domestic water supplies	64
„ „ „ sampling of water supplies ...	44
„ „ „ food premises ... ..	60
„ „ „ Ice Cream production etc. ...	33
„ „ „ Moveable Dwellings ... ..	130
„ „ „ keeping of animals ... ..	18
„ „ under Factories Act, 1937 ... ..	45
„ „ re Rats & Mice Destruction Act ...	61
„ „ of Bakehouses ... ..	38
„ „ „ Butchers Shops ... ..	28
„ „ „ Knackers Yards ... ..	3
„ „ re ditches and streams ... ..	4
„ „ under Milk and Dairies Orders ...	206
„ „ re Refuse Collection and Disposal ...	98
„ „ „ Infectious Disease, etc. ... ..	23
„ Miscellaneous unspecified visits ... ..	301
Total	1588

## ERADICATION OF VERMIN

Very few cases of vermin infestation were dealt with during the year. Two serious cases of Bed-bug infestation were reported and it was necessary to employ the services of a specialist firm to carry out the necessary disinfection work. In other cases Proprietary Insecticides with residual D.D.T. were used satisfactorily and no repeat treatment was necessary.

## FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Very little action has been found necessary during the year and only minor contraventions have been dealt with. The following is the list of Factories and Workplaces in the District.

Bakers and Confectioners	...	...	12
Engineering, including Garages	...	...	13
Electricity generating	...	...	2
Joinery, Woodworking, Undertaking	...	...	6
Testing of flow meters	...	...	1
Coachbuilding	...	...	2
Milk Pasteurising	...	...	1
Laundering	...	...	1
Corn Milling	...	...	1
Manufacture of Smoke Bombs	...	...	1
Sausage Making	...	...	1
Total			41

## OUTWORKERS

There were four outworkers notified to the Office by other Authorities. In each case an inspection of the home conditions was made and found to be satisfactory.

## REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The Salvage of Waste Materials (No. 2) Order 1942 and the Salvage of Waste Materials (No. 3) Order 1942, which prohibited the abandonment, throwing away or mixing with refuse, of waste paper, rags, rope and string were revoked during the year and all articles of household refuse are now collected weekly in the Parishes of Amesbury, Bulford, Durrington and Shrewton and fortnightly in the other Parishes. Saleable materials, such as iron and rags, are separated at the refuse tip and are sold to Contractors. The system of controlled tipping continues to work satisfactorily.

## HOUSING

Owing to the continued restrictions on building operations, action under the Housing and Public Health Acts was again limited to the investigation of complaints, and the service of notices for immediate and urgent repairs. A large number of properties in various parts of the District, and occupied by civilians, are owned by Government Departments and outside the Council's jurisdiction but in one case negotiations were opened with the Department concerned with a view to preserving the properties.



**ACTION TAKEN UNDER THE HOUSING ACT, 1936 AND PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936**

1.	Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requesting defects to be remedied	...	...	109
2.	Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied as a result of such action	...	...	85
<b>Proceedings under Section 11, Housing Act, 1936.</b>				
1.	Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	1
2.	Number of Dwelling Houses demolished	...	...	1
3.	Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Undertakings were accepted by this Authority	...	...	1

**RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT, 1919**

In dealing with complaints of infestation received during the year the control methods recommended by the Ministry of Food were satisfactorily employed. Most of the District still comes under the Wiltshire Agricultural Executive Committee or the Service Departments for this purpose.

The Council has contracts with the Wiltshire Executive Committee in respect of the Refuse Tip and Sewerage Works and treatments to the former are supplemented by the Council's workmen.

**WATER SUPPLY**

The Public Supplies owned and operated by the Council are in the Parishes of Amesbury, Bulford & Durrington, and Shrewton.

**Amesbury.** The quantity of water in the two bores does not vary greatly and a sufficient supply is ensured for existing consumers including the large service installation at Boscombe Down. In order to ensure this amount, however, the present pumps have been worked to capacity and heavy new demands made during the year have instituted the design of a Scheme for linking up the Bulford and Durrington Supply with the Amesbury Supply. This joining of the two Supplies, with the use of zoning valves, will enable a part of Amesbury to be supplied from Durrington, where there is not such a heavy demand.

**Shrewton and Bulford & Durrington.** These supplies continue to function satisfactorily. There is ample reserve for future connections.

During the early part of the year the results of samples of water taken from the Shrewton Supply showed evidence of contamination. An immediate investigation was made and revealed the cause of the trouble to be a defect in the cooling system of the pump whereby water was re-entering the borehole. This defect was remedied and all subsequent samples of the water have proved satisfactory.

The under-mentioned Parishes are supplied from privately owned water schemes :—

**Cholderton** (Cholderton Water Co.) ;

**Wilsford & Lake** (Lt.-Col. F. G. Bailey) ;

**Tilshead.** During the last part of the year the Council arranged for a bulk supply from the nearby War Department Trunk Main. A 4" main was laid through the village and towards the end of the year the majority of the houses had been connected to the main and were provided with a piped supply inside the house.

Regular samples from all the above supplies were submitted for bacteriological examination and were free from contamination.

## **DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE**

Tests of the effluent taken from the Amesbury sewerage disposal plant by the County Public Health Authorities were satisfactory, despite the fact that an even heavier demand was made on the Works by the connection of the whole of the Royal Air Force Establishment at Boscombe Down.

**Bulford & Durrington Sewerage Scheme.** Further progress was made regarding the provision of a sewage scheme for these two Parishes and by the end of the year the Council had reached provisional agreement with the War Department for the purchase of the Sewerage Disposal Works at Ratfyn, Amesbury, into which the sewage from these Parishes will be discharged. Negotiations for the purchase of the Pumping Station site at Bulford Bridge were also successfully completed. It is hoped that all outstanding points in connection with the Disposal Works will soon be cleared up and the purchase completed, so that work can be commenced on this very necessary and important scheme.

## **INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD**

**Milk Supply.** Inspections under the Milk & Dairies Order were continued until 1st October, 1949, on which date the responsibility for the inspection of Dairy Farms passed from local authorities to the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries. Routine inspections were regular and steady with greater attention to the poorer type of producer, and improvements resulted in most cases.

Under the Milk & Dairies Regulations, 1949, the Council is now only the authority for the Registration of Premises used as Dairies (not being Dairy Farms) and regular inspections have been made of all registered premises.



During the year three new Dairies have been erected at Amesbury, Durrington and Idmiston. The former is a large establishment serving the greater part the area and is equipped with the most up-to-date plant. This establishment deals with the milk produced from a large number of farms in the District and is receiving approximately 1850 gallons per day. All milk is Pasteurised by the High Temperature Short Time process and is stored in a mechanically cooled room until the time of delivery. All samples taken have been satisfactory. The premises previously used by this firm were most unsuitable and by the erection of this particular building and the methods employed in the handling and processing of the milk it is felt that much has been done to safeguard the public health.

**Slaughter Houses.** There are no licensed slaughter houses in this area; the slaughter of all animals for human consumption is carried out at the Government centralised slaughter houses situated at Stratford-sub-Castle and Downton.

**Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933.** The total number of licensed Slaughtermen in the area on 31st December, 1949, was 16.

**Ice Cream Premises.** Routine inspections of all premises where Ice Cream is manufactured or sold were made during the year.

There is only one manufacturer in the District, all others purchasing in bulk from registered suppliers who are under strict supervision.

**Food Preparing Premises.** Regular inspections have been made of all premises where food is prepared and considerable improvement has resulted in a number of cases.

**Meat & Other Foods Condemned during 1949.**

Beef	...	...	411 lbs.	Fish	...	...	216 lbs.
Mutton	...	...	115 lbs.	Tinned Meat	...	...	12 lbs.
Bacon	...	...	33 lbs.	Biscuits	...	...	28 lbs.
Tinned Fish	...	...	131 tins	Cheese	...	...	5 lbs.
			Salad Cream	...	...	...	18 bottles







P. JAY & SON  
BEDWIN STREET  
SALISBURY